

Testimony Against Senate Bill 88

Submitted by: Jackie Zong

Testifying as Opponent

May 26, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear and members of the Senate General Government Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify against Senate Bill 88. I am Jackie Zong, a long time Ohio resident.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 88, which unfairly targets immigrant communities under the pretense of national security. These bills revive the discriminatory history of Alien Land Laws, which have been ruled unconstitutional and have long been used to suppress Asian, Muslim and immigrant communities.

By restricting land ownership based on nationality, S.B.88 not only fosters racial profiling, but also discourages immigrants from contributing to Ohio's economy. By singling out individuals based on national origin, these bills inflame racialized suspicion and encourage discrimination — not just against foreign nationals, but also against American citizens and permanent residents of Asian and immigrant backgrounds.

As a parent of two young children of Asian descent, born and raised in Ohio, I am deeply troubled by the implication of this bill. It is frightening to think about their future in a state where the law may encourage discrimination against them.

Moreover, S.B.88 fails to protect lawfully present individuals such as those on student visas, work visas, asylum seekers, and refugees. In my workplace, I have many talented coworkers currently on h1b visas, in the process of obtaining green card, or who have recently become permanent residents. A lot of them were once international students at various universities in Ohio. If a bill like this is were to take effect, it would deter many talented students who could have stayed and contributed significantly to our local economy.

The potential impact on our local economy devastating. We risk losing not only the talent that has been or could be making meaningful contributions, but also cohesion of our work culture. This bill threatens to create division and undermine the inclusive environment that is essential for innovation and growth.

In conclusion, I urge you to STOP S.B.88 to ensure Ohio remains a welcoming state for all its residents. Let us not allow fear and discrimination to dictate our policies. Instead, let us embrace diversity and inclusivity, which are the true strengths of our great state. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jackie Zong